

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 OUAGAD 03889 301123Z  
ACTION AF-10

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FM AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8076

C O N F I D E N T I A L OUAGADOUGOU 3889

FOR AF/W SMITH FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: EAID, SHUM,UV  
SUBJECT: CHRISTOPHER GROUP MEETING ON UPPER VOLTA

REF: STATE 218315

1. DISCUSSION OF SSA FOR UPPER VOLTA IN THE CHRISTOPHER GROUP AUGUST 31 PROVIDES AND EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS ON WHAT SEEMS TO ME TO BE A STRUCTURAL INADEQUACY IN OVERALL U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY. THE PROBLEM IS THAT WHILE THE HIGHEST LEVEL U.S. OFFICIALS HAVE PUBLICLY EMPHASIZED THAT U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY SHOULD BE BASED PRIMARILY ON REWARD AND ENCOURAGEMENT, IN PRACTICE PUNISHMENT AND CRITICISM HAVE BEEN THE MAIN ELEMENTS OF OUR POLICY.

2. IN THE CASE OF UPPER VOLTA, PRESIDENT LAMIZANA HAS LED THE WAY IN TRANSFORMING AN AUTHORITARIAN GOVERNMENT INTO A DEMOCRATIC REGIME. LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS WERE HELD ON APRIL 30 OF THIS YEAR, A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION OCCURRED MAY 14 IN WHICH LAMIZANA DID NOT RECEIVE AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY, AND A RUNOFF WAS HELD MAY 28 WITH LAMIZANA WINNING A MODEST 55 PERCENT OF THE VOTE. THE ELCTIONS WERE OPENLY AND HEATEDLY CONTESTED, OPPOSITION CRITICISM OF THE GOVERNMENT MAJORITY WAS (AND IS) FREELY EXPRESSED, CONFIDENTIAL

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THE PRESS REMAINS FREE, AND THE STATE-OPERATED RADIO CONTINUES OPEN TO ALL VIEWS. VOLTANS MAKE THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS KNOWN. THERE ARE NO POLITICAL PRISONERS. AN OPEN SOCIETY, AND PARTICULARLY A VOLUNTARY TRANSITION FROM DICTATORIAL TO DEMOCRATIC RULE, ARE RARE DEVELOPMENTS IN AFRICA AND THE WORLD. IF EVER THERE WAS A CASE FOR ENCOURAGEMENT AND REWARD, UPPER VOLTA IS IT.

3. THE QUESTION IS, WHAT REWARD. AN INCREASE, EVEN A GENEROUS INCREASE IN PROPOSED ECONOMIC AND MILITARY SUPPORT LEVELS, WOULD NOT MAKE THE POINT. SOMEHOW A WAY MUST BE FOUND TO REWARD THOSE FEW COUNTRIES WHICH ACHIEVE HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRESS--AND TO REWARD THEM IN DRAMATIC FASHION WITH A CLEAR LINKAGE TO HUMAN RIGHTS. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL FUND TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE CHRISTOPHER GROUP MIGHT BE ONE WAY OF GETTING AT THE PROBLEM.

4. THE GREAT PROGRESS OF POLITICAL HUMAN RIGHTS IN UPPER VOLTA COVERS A SITUATION WHICH IS STILL FRAGILE. A MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT WHICH BECOMES RESTIVE AT SIGNS OF GOVERNMENT INEFFICIENCY AND DIVISIVENESS, AND EFFERVESCENT BUT DIVIDED LABOR MOVEMENT, AND AN ALMOST EVEN SPLIT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT (29SEATS) AND THE OPPOSITION (28SEATS) IN THE NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ARE ALL PROBLEMS. ENCOURAGEMENT AND REWARD COULD MAKE A DIFFERENCE HERE. I HOPE THAT THE CHRISTOPHER GROUP WILL DISCUSS WAYS OF REWARDING THE GOUV FOR PROGRESS ALREADY MADE AND AS AN INDUCEMENT TO CONTINUED MOMENTUM. BOYATT

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## Message Attributes

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